

Our leaders evaluate the decision

Alaska's top political leaders agreed Thursday that President Nixon's resignation was in the best interests of the nation and expressed hope that it would change the nation's political fortunes for the better.

The state's two U.S. Senators — Republican Ted Stevens and Democrat Mike Gravel — differed in their sentiments of Nixon's presidency but agreed that Congress and the new President must work together to resolve economic difficulties.

Here is their assessment of the President's decision, as well as that of Rep. Don Young, Gov. William A. Egan and Former Gov. Walter J. Hickel, who served 22 months in Nixon's first Cabinet.

Sen. Ted Stevens — Republican

In a statement from Washington, Alaska's senior senator indicated he was not satisfied with the state of affairs. "Resignation by a president could set a precedent that could cause greater problems in the future," he said, but predicted the government would continue smoothly. "While I regret deeply the events that have made it necessary for this change in our presidency, it will occur without drastic changes in our nation."

The decision was one that "many people believe was the right thing to do under the circumstances. Right now I think we must all do whatever we can to help make the transfer of executive authority to President Ford as smooth as possible." Stevens said Alaska has "a good friend" in Vice President Ford. "He has a tough job ahead of him, and I pledge to do all I can to help him as he becomes President of the United States."



Stevens

Sen. Mike Gravel — Democrat

Alaska's junior senator spoke of the "personal tragedy" of the resignation but said that nowhere in Nixon's speech did he show remorse. "The admission that he has lost his political base is the reason he is leaving office. He spoke of personal vindication, that he was denied the opportunity to secure justice, which means he thinks that he is innocent, and that his actions were in the best interests of the nation. Acts of criminality are never in the best interests of the nation."

Gravel said Ford's administration would be a "caretaker presidency" but that he had many friends in Congress and could work with the legislative branch to solve economic problems. Congress had "the responsibility to see that all of the information surrounding Watergate is made public so that he cannot go down in history saying he was manhandled, suffered a great injustice at the hands of the Congress or the people of this country or the media."

Rep. Don Young — Republican

Alaska's lone U.S. Representative said Nixon acted in the nation's interests in resigning. "I fervently hope that now we can all turn our attention away from the issue known as Watergate and direct our attention to the unity of our nation — the people of Alaska and the solution of those problems that face us today." Young, in a statement from Washington, said the impeachment process would not continue. "It would be a moot question and I believe the public would not support it. I think most of the facts are before the American people and I think the American people are tired. If it has to be pursued further, it will be pursued in the courts."



Young

Gov. William A. Egan — Democrat

Alaska's governor said the resignation was a traumatic event for the democratic system but that he was proud the government had "withstood this terrible frustration ... and that we can go on to the better things and a better way of life." The day's events were "proof of the strength of our system. I think that the new President must get on with it to solve the economic ills which beset our country, deal with the international problems and get the nation moving. It will exemplify the greatness of our nation — that the change-over will come without hardly a ripple in the lives of most Americans." Egan said he believed former Atty. Gen. Elliot Richardson would be a "logical choice" for vice president. Asked whether Ford was qualified to confront the nation's problems, he said: "Sometimes people rise to the greatness that is needed."

Former Gov. Walter J. Hickel — Republican

The man who served for nearly two years as Nixon's Interior secretary saw the resignation as "the end of a political era." Hickel, who was fired from the Cabinet post after publicly pointing out Nixon's self-imposed isolation, described as a factor in Nixon's downfall, said "a new generation of leaders" would emerge which would have broader interests and concerns than the old generation. "I think there'll be a more direct involvement and input from the feelings of America. The problem of President Nixon was that his input was limited by his staff so the feelings of America were a long time getting there. I think there will be a more open approach to ideas." Hickel described Ford as a "reachable" man. "He invites ideas, he is a man of good dignity, honesty and decency. I think America more than looking for greatness at the moment is just looking for decency," he said. Hickel said Richardson, former Defense Sec. Melvin Laird and former New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller were all likely candidates for vice president but that he preferred Rockefeller.



Hickel



Mrs. Gruening, with son Huntington and grandson Clark

Tribute to Gruening

By HOWARD WEAVER
Daily News Staff Writer

Beneath towering bronze murals which tell the story of Alaska, more than 200 friends of Ernest Gruening gathered Thursday night at the Fourth Avenue Theater in celebration of his memory.

His widow, Dorothy, sat near the front, a frail, proud woman cloaked in dignity and a fur wrap. His son Huntington and grandson Clark listened as nine old friends told of their memories of the man who served Alaska as governor, senator and senior statesman.

JUNEAU Superior Court Judge Thomas B. Stewart led friends through stories which told how Ernest Gruening touched the life of a state and the lives of its citizens.

"He walked across the Arctic in seven-league boots, and his tracks will always remain," said M. R. "Muktuk" Marston, who with Gruening formed the Eskimo Scout Battalions. "No time will erase those tracks."

"Ernest Gruening went with me as we tore down signs that said 'No Natives,' right here in Anchorage, in Juneau and in Nome," Marston said.

"HE GENTLY showed me — and many other young people across the nation — a vision of life," said Brenda Ita of Barrow. "In Alaska especially, I thank God that

there was a man to tear down those signs."

Anchorage lawyer Wendell E. Kay called Gruening "a man of courage and compassion," and said, "In the many battles which he fought, not one found him on the side of wealth or privilege. You knew where he would be, in the trenches, leading his tattered army toward dignity. His was the courage which never looked back to see how many soldiers followed. He knew what was right without polling the people."

Those who appeared to remember Gruening included George Sundborg, his former Senate aide; Celia Niemelä, who worked on his staff; Fred Machentanz, an artist and old friend; Katie Hurley, his first secretary in Alaska and Erick McGinnis, the commissioner of Health and Social Services.

The services closed as Myles Brandon led the gathering in singing "Alaska's Flag."

The spirit of Ernest Gruening was present, noted by Kay. "If a map is a mote of dust, burning in infinity, our friend burned a little longer and a good deal brighter than most. Our way was a bit brighter for it."

Marston perhaps provided the closing thought when he said, "Dorothy, Ernest is not dead — he lives on in the great land. Be of good cheer."

State politicians relieved it's over

By ANDY WILLIAMS
Daily News Staff Writer

Local political reaction to President Nixon's resignation Thursday ranged from relief that the episode was over to fear that it might not be.

Candidates and other politicians said Nixon's resignation proved the resiliency of the nation's democratic system. They urged the public to support the new President in his efforts to govern.

"THE WHOLE Watergate episode proves that in America you can use power but you can't abuse it," said State Sen. Chancy Croft, D-Anchorage. Croft and others noted the past decade, beginning with the assassination of President Kennedy, was not a happy one for the nation's chief executives. Croft said it was "tragic irony that we will be going into the 200-year bicentennial celebration with an appointed President."

Most candidates watched the resignation speech carried live by two Anchorage television stations. Several — including Sen. Mike Gravel, D-Alaska, Republican gubernatorial candidates Jay Hammond and Walter J. Hickel, Republican candidate for lieutenant governor Lowell Thomas, and State Senate candidates Genie Chance, a Democrat, and Jess Harris, a Republican — watched the speech at the KTVA studios.

HAMMOND SAID Nixon's presentation was "a deeply moving speech" but that the action was "unsatisfying and doesn't really resolve the issues." He said the resignation could set a precedent that could endanger future presidencies.

THE TOP U.S. Senate candidates all issued statements commenting on the resignation.

State Senate President Terry Miller, Republican candidate for Gravel's seat, called the Watergate episode "an American tragedy." He said the speech itself was "somewhat more abbreviated than what I would have expected for a final statement from a President of the United States."

GENE GUESS, Democratic candidate for the Senate, said he regretted events that forced Nixon's resignation but that they had demonstrated "again the great strength of this country and its constitutional form of government."

"The country is stronger than any President and I think the sad events of today will renew faith in our people for our kind of government," he said.

State Sen. C.R. Lewis, the other Republican candidate for the Senate, said he had sent a telegram to Vice President Ford offering "wholehearted support as you undertake to lead this country in these traumatic and turbulent times."

Ford

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session of Congress is also scheduled for either Monday or Tuesday.

THE ASSOCIATE said plans for the transition began Monday. Although the release of three new presidential transcripts had their impact, the call by Sen. Robert P. Griffin, R-Mich., for Nixon to resign was the tip-off to Ford that the end of the Nixon presidency was near, the associate said.

Griffin is a close friend of Ford and had been a staunch supporter of the President.

Ford has specifically decided to ask White House Chief of Staff Alexander M. Haig Jr. to stay on.

Among potential vice presidents on a list drawn up by Ford's staff are former Atty. Gen. Elliot P. Richardson; former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird; former New York Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller; Sens. Robert A. Taft of Ohio, Mark Hatfield of Oregon, Edward W. Brooke of Massachusetts, Robert Stafford of Vermont; Charles Percy of Illinois; Bill Brock of Tennessee; Gov. Ronald Reagan of California; former New York Sen. Charles Goodell; and Reps. Albert H. Quie of Minnesota and John B. Anderson of Illinois.

The Ford associate said only a few among those on the staff list are under serious consideration by Ford and he predicted extensive investigations would be made into the smaller list over the next few days.

The source said although a number of persons close to Ford have strongly urged that Rockefeller be the choice, Ford is unlikely to select the veteran millionaire politician.

1st President ever to resign

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shalling support for a resolution to give Nixon immunity from Watergate prosecution, said he would drop that effort unless Nixon offers a "full confession" of his involvement in Watergate.

As of noon Friday, private citizen Nixon will become vulnerable to legal processes ranging from being subpoenaed as a witness in the Watergate cover-up trial to indictment as a participant in the effort to hide the scandal.

THE GRAND jury that indicted seven former administration and political aides for the cover-up named Nixon as an unindicted co-conspirator.

It reportedly chose that course after the special prosecutor advised that there would be serious constitutional questions involved in criminal charges against a president.

The prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, said there had been no agreement or understanding about future legal action in connection with Nixon's resignation.

NIXON SAID that throughout the Watergate scandals, he had felt it his duty to persevere. But within the past

few days — since he admitted withholding damaging evidence about his own role in the case — it became evident "that I no longer have a strong enough political base in the Congress to justify continuing that effort."

The President said his family opposed resignation, that it was abhorrent to him to quit, but that for the sake of the nation, it had to be done.

Nixon concluded with no good night, no farewell, but a prayer: "May God's grace be with you all in the days ahead."

NIXON DECLARED of Ford: "The leadership of America will be in good hands."

Nixon's future legal situation as a private citizen remained unclear. Watergate special prosecutor Leon Jaworski said he had no agreement or understanding with the President about the resignation.

In Ford, America will have for the first time a president by appointment, not election. Nixon chose Ford to succeed Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned last Oct. 10 and accepted conviction

on income tax evasion charges in a bribery and kick-back scandal.

NOW, FORD will select his own vice president.

"In all the decisions I have made in my public life, I have always tried to do what was best for the nation," Nixon said.

Nixon said he had consecrated his 2,026-day presidency from the beginning to the cause of world peace. Because of that, he said, the world today is a safe place. Nixon said he hopes that is what history will deem to be the legacy of his presidency.

Nixon's announcement came six years to the day after his triumphant Republican nomination for a second try at the White House, a 1968 campaign he won narrowly over Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey.

MIDWAY through his speech Nixon reviewed the foreign policy accomplishments of his 5 years in office.

"We have ended America's long war," he said in a reference to the conflict in Vietnam.

"I am confident the world is a safer place today."

TV stations gear up for live coverage

The historic events surrounding President Nixon's resignation will be covered by Anchorage television and radio stations today as follows:

KTVA-TV, Channel 11:
• 7 to 8 a.m., swearing in of Vice President Gerald Ford as President of the United States (live).
• 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., rebroadcast of swearing in ceremony (taped).

KENI-TV, Channel 2:
• 7 to 7:30 a.m., swearing in of Vice President Ford (live).
• 7:30 to 8 a.m., rebroadcast of NBC's Thursday night news (taped).
• 8 to 11 a.m., NBC News staff commentary and analysis immediately following President Nixon's resignation Thursday (taped).

The swearing in of Ford at 7 a.m. will also be carried live by radio stations KENI, KFQD, KBVR, KNK and KYAK.

KENI and KTVA-TV will also broadcast President Gerald Ford's 15-minute address to the nation live today. The time for the address had not been set by Daily News press time.

KIMO-TV, Channel 13, had not learned by Daily News press time what programs it would broadcast.

Relief

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tional speech," was all she would say.

One gray-haired man stood close by the console with, "It's that damn East along with that Eastern news media. They beat him out." And one Nixon-lover glared at a reporter, "You did it!" But most speech listeners, questioned later, said they were glad he resigned. Glad in a sad sort of way.

In a Safeway grocery in the Northern Lights Shopping Center shortly after the speech, Bill Harriman, an insurance broker, put it this way, "I just feel empty inside. The image to the world is very bad. I feel a great pity for the man — but I'm glad he's out." His wife Betty agreed.

PUTTING tomatoes in her cart nearby Jennifer Simpson, 29, commented, "He wanted to be a good President." Jennifer is an Air National Guard clerk.

At the Safeway Snack Bar, Clint Ray, a retail clerk, sat alone eating a steak. "The final act just had no shock value to me. It's been going on too long."

Thelma and Walter Achamire were eating in studied silence at Alma's Delicatessen on Fairbanks Street an hour after Nixon's speech. "The things he said made you feel sorry for him as a human being. But they drew you away from his criminal acts. It would have been healthy and fair if he'd gone through impeachment," said Thelma, a secretary.

"I HAVE absolutely no emotions. I'm just tired," said Walter, a high school teacher.

Earlier in the day in various sections of the city, fiery feelings were being voiced as citizens awaited the 4 p.m. speech.

Muktuk Marston, longtime Alaskan and organizer of the Eskimo Scouts, jolted up from a leather chair in the Captain Cook Hotel lobby with, "It's high time he got out. We were a nation without control. Impeachment would have taken too long."

Marine engineer Howard Farrell, 62, on a lobby bench in the Captain Cook, could not be happier about the resignation. "You can never trust a liar. That's all there is to it."

Legion results

By the Associated Press
American Legion state playoffs in Sitka.

Thursday's Game
East Anchorage 8, Fairbanks 7
Juneau v. Sitka (2nd game).

Forecast, Sun-Tides

CLOUDY with some light rain this morning, sunny periods this afternoon. Mostly cloudy tonight and mostly sunny Saturday. High today in low 60s, low tonight mid-40s. Outlook for Sunday, mostly sunny.

HOURS OF DAYLIGHT
16 Hours, 24 Minutes
Sunset today 9:16 p.m.
Sunrise tomorrow 4:55 a.m.
TIDES AT ANCHORAGE
High 10:48 p.m. 28.0 ft. 5:12 p.m. 4.4 ft.
Low 11:36 a.m. 24.5 ft. 5:59 a.m. 1.8 ft.

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

MONTHLY MAIL SUBSCRIPTION RATES
2nd class — postage paid
July/August \$5.35
July/only \$3.25
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